

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please add or amend the claims to read as follows:

1. **(Original)** A system for switching variable size packets in a network comprising:

at least one ingress controller which receives a plurality of packets and which segments each of the packets into fixed sized fragments, the at least one ingress controller having a time-clock, all ingress controller's time-clocks are synchronized to within a tolerance, each fragment is tagged with at least a unique source of ID, a time-stamp, and a fragment number to form a cell, each cell belonging to one packet having the same time-stamp value, the ingress controller sends each of the cells through a link such that a cell's destination is reachable through that link;

a fabric element which receives cells from a plurality of inputs links, where such cells are ordered, and sends ordered cells through a plurality of outputs, and through which the destination of the cells is reachable, where the cell order is defined such that a cell ahead of another either has a lagging time stamp, or if the timestamp is the same the cell ahead of another has a source-id which has a predetermined priority, or if both the timestamp and the source-id are the same the cell ahead of another has a lagging fragment number; and

at least one egress controller which receives ordered cells from the plurality of input links, and sends ordered cells through an output, where such order results in complete packets.

2. **(Original)** The system of claim 1 where the fabric element selects a cell for transmission if all incoming links FIFOs have at least one cell.

3. **(Previously presented)** The system of claim 1 where the egress controller selects a cell for output if all incoming links FIFOs have at least one cell.

4. **(Original)** The system of claim 1 where the ingress controller sends an empty cell through output link if no data fragment is available, where such empty cells contain at least the current local timestamp, and source-id.

5. **(Original)** The system of claim 2 where the ingress controller sends an empty cell through output link if no data fragment is available, where such empty cells contain at least the current local timestamp, and source-id.
6. **(Original)** The system of claim 4, where when empty cells are received by a fabric element they are stored in the fabric element's corresponding link input FIFO if that FIFO has less cells than a threshold.
7. **(Original)** The system of claim 5, where when empty cells are received by a fabric element they are stored in the fabric element's corresponding link input FIFO if that FIFO has less cells than a threshold.
8. **(Currently amended)** The system of claim 1 where the fabric element sends an empty cell through output link if no data fragment is available, where such empty cells contain at least the timestamp, source-id, and fragment number of the last cell that was processed by the ~~ingress-controller~~ fabric element.
9. **(Currently amended)** The system of claim 3 where the fabric element sends an empty cell through output link if no data fragment is available, where such empty cells contain at least the timestamp, source-id, and fragment number of the last cell that was processed by the ~~ingress-controller~~ fabric element.
10. **(Previously presented)** The system of claim 6, where when an empty cell is received by the egress controller it is stored in the fabric element's corresponding link input FIFO if that FIFO has less cells then a threshold.
11. **(Previously presented)** The system of claim 7, where when an empty cell is received by the egress controller it is stored in the fabric element's corresponding link input FIFO if that FIFO has less cells then a threshold.

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12. **(Original)** The system of claim 1 where the fabric element selects a cell for transmission if all active incoming links FIFOs have at least one cell, where active links are links through which a cell with at least a timestamp, source-id was received in a past period.

13. **(previously presented)** The system of claim 1, where the egress controller selects a cell for output if all active incoming links FIFOs have at least one cell, where active links are links through which a cell with at least a timestamp, source-id was received in a past period.

14. **(Original)** The system of claim 1, where ingress controller sends cells through a link such that cell's destination is reachable through that link and such that all possible links are load balanced.

15. **(Original)** The system of claim 1, where fabric element sends cells through links through which a cell's destination is reachable, and where all possible output links for such cell are load balanced.

16. **(Original)** The system of claim 14, where the ingress controller maintains a reachability table used to determine which links are possible for a destination.

17. **(Original)** The system of claim 15, where the fabric element maintains a reachability table used to determine which links are possible for a destination.